And many *Iasons* come in queſt of her.
O my *Anthonio*, had I but the meanes
To hold a riuall place with one of them,
I haue a minde preſages me ſuch thrift
That I ſhould queſtionleſſe be fortunate.

Anth. Thou knowſt that all my fortunes are at ſea,
Neither haue I money, nor commoditie
To raiſe a preſent ſumme, therefore goe forth
Try what my credite can in Venice doe,
That ſhall be rackt euen to the vttermoſt
To furniſh thee to *Belmont* to faire *Portia*.
Goe preſently enquire and ſo will I
vvhere money is, and I no queſtion make
To haue it of my truſt, or for my ſake. *Exeunt.*

Enter *Portia* with her wayting woman *Nerriſſa*.

Portia. By my troth *Nerriſſa*, my little body is awearie of this great world.

Ner. You would be ſweet Madam, if your miſeries were in the ſame aboundance as your good fortunes are: and yet for ought I ſee, they are as ſicke that ſurfeite with too much, as they that ſtarue with nothing; it is no meane happines therfore to be ſeated in the meane, ſuperfluitie comes ſooner by white haires, but competencie liues longer.

Portia. Good ſentences, and well pronounc'd.

Ner. They would be better if well followed.

Portia. If to do were as eaſie as to know what were good to do, Chappels had beene Churches, and poore mens cottages Princes Pallaces, it is a good diuine that followes his owne inſtructions, I can eaſier teach twentie what were good to be done, then to be one of the twentie to follow mine owne teaching: the braine may deuiſe lawes for the blood, but a hote temper leapes ore a colde decree, ſuch a hare is madnes the youth, to skippe ore the meſhes of good counſaile the cripple; but this reaſoning is not in the faſhion to chooſe mee a husband, ô mee the word chooſe, I may neyther chooſe who I would, nor refuſe who I diſlike, ſo is the will of a lyuing daughter curbd by the will of a deade father: is it not harde

Nerriſſa,

Nerriſſa, that I cannot chooſe o
Ner. Your Father was euer
death haue good inſpirations, th
uiſed in theſe three cheſts of go
chooſes his meaning chooſes y
by any rightlie, but one who
warmth is there in your affecti
ſuters that are already come?
Por. I pray thee ouer-name
will deſcribe them, and accord
affection.
Ner. Firſt there is the Neop
Por. I thats a colt indeede, f
horſe, & he makes it a great ap
that he can ſhoo him himſelfe
mother plaid falſe with a Smyth
Ner. Than is there the Cou
Por. Hee doth nothing but
will not haue me, chooſe, he he
feare hee will prooue the weep
old, beeing ſo full of vnmanner
be married to a deaths head wit
ther of theſe: God defend me f
Ner. How ſay you by the F
Por. God made him, and th
truth I knowe it is a ſinne to be
horſe better then the Neopolit
then the Count Palentine, he i
ſing, he falls ſtraght a capring,
If I ſhould marry him, I ſhoul
would deſpiſe me, *I* would for
nes, *I* ſhall neuer requite him.
Ner. What ſay you then to
of England?
Por. You know *I* ſay noth
me, nor *I* him: he hath neither
will come into the Court and

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* (STC 22296) LONDON, 1600 THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.